

Wednesday, December 23, 2015

## QUESTIONS ON ABLE ARCHER 83 AND WAR SCARE

From DE comments on Part I, War Scare (2013)

--Get Time cover story, Dec. 83, Andropov and Reagan, Men of the year (!)

--What were the various purposes of Autumn Forge 83, Reforger 83 (movement of 19,000 US troops by air, radio-silence), and above all, Able Archer 83? Why then, in its unprecedented aspects and scale? What impression was it supposed to make on SU?

Why movement to nuclear war in 1983?!!!

What if that nuclear aspect had been known to anti-nuclear movement in US (Central Park, June 1982) or to Europe? (500,000 protest in Bonn!)

Was it known?

Term first known with "the first public exposé of the incident in an October 16, 1988, *Sunday Telegraph* article entitled "Brink of World War III: When the World Almost Went to War."

Did Andropov make any effort to get the exercise called off? Or, SU observers? How much did SU intell find out—before, during, after—of details of scenario, or nuclear aspect? Any SU protest over its nature? If they knew of nuclear aspect, would they have made it public? Protested?

On the other hand, if he really considered preempting it, did it make sense to denounce it—or Reagan—so much beforehand, signaling his fear, anxiety?

p. 6: <sup>[SO:</sup> **Why was the Reagan administration preparing for nuclear war? Really, for deterrence? (Then, it failed! It raised chance of being attacked! Attacked in the way our own plans called for! (?) To out-spend SU? Again...(it may have achieved this, with some effect: but at risk to Type I deterrence!) And why was Type II needed at all in 1984?!]**

\\i.e. "preemption" was to take place on evidence of a "decision" or "preparations," NOT once attack was being launched! P-II simply didn't allow time for the latter! Nor would Dead Hand allow for significant damage-limiting! (Didn't SAC/JCS reach that same conclusion?)

The late Mark Palmer, a top Kremlinologist in the State Department (and U.S. ambassador to Hungary from 1986 to 1990), retrospectively summarized the Reagan administration's internal "argument" about "what the Soviet view of the West is," in an unpublished interview with *The Washington Post's* Don Oberdorfer.

**"Paul [Nitze's and others] view is that they [the Soviets] never really felt threatened ... And most Western analysts — or many, particularly the political-military type analysts feel that way, because they have a hard time, I think, psychologically seeing, as most people do, seeing themselves as possibly being a bad guy in anyone else's eyes.... [I.e., "how could anyone see US as an evil empire?"]**

#### **[NITZE WRONG! AND "FALSE MIRROR IMAGING".**

"I, on the other hand, think that what Gordievsky [whom he met] reported in '81 and etc. — that he's reporting accurately the mood in Moscow. That the Soviets have felt surrounded, that **they are paranoid, that they have seen us as being unpredictable and irresponsible from their point of view in doing all sorts of things — invading communist countries**, etc, all sorts of stuff. Therefore, I find this entirely credible that they could have, during [what was] a very tense period anyway, [] saw the INF deployments as a threat to them. These were missiles that could hit the Soviet Union. Their [analogous] missiles -the SS 20s- could not hit the United States."

The thirteenth issue of the "Soviet Propaganda Alert," sent to CIA Director William Casey, relayed that Soviet media had reported that the Pentagon was making "horrendous plans for unleashing and conducting protracted nuclear war against the Soviet Union." Soviet media described the U.S. strategy as "escalating a conflict to nuclear war and delivering a first strike, in particular by intermediate-range missiles in Western Europe."

**[POINT IS THAT THE LEADERS BELIEVED WHAT THEY WERE SAYING TO THE WEST! TO REJECT THE MISSILES, BECAUSE (THE LEADERS REALLY BELIEVED) THEY WERE TO ATTACK THE SU!**

**Dec. 14, DE comments on Nathan Jones' thesis:**

**"Operation RYAN —a global effort to provide strategic warning of a U.S. nuclear first strike erroneously reported to the Center that the NATO military exercise Able Archer 83 was really a cover for a planned nuclear attack upon the USSR, causing the USSR to ready nuclear strike forces in East Germany and Poland. "**

**Did they really say it "was": or might be"?**

Thus, the US continued provocative PSYOPS probes that increased SU feeling of danger, and thus danger to the US (the intell community knew of alleged fear, but not of the covert operations! The operators knew of the ops but not of the fear, or its implications. The president was told not to fear the SU fear (by Gates and...) AA went ahead; also P-II deployment, etc.

Cold War II was real, on both sides. And dangerous!

And looked like CW III! (starting...? For Russians...?)

And CW II was started by Jimmy Carter (and crew)! And he initiated many of the dangers, the provocations! Despite his original impulses wrt strategic nuclear arsenal.

It's déjà vu all over again! (p. 10, Zubok, A Failed Empire, 265: "the early 1980s had a feeling of déjà vu." (After "relative parity and cordiality achieved by the two powers during the 20 years since the Missiles of October" "had disappeared by 1983, paving the way for the Missiles of November." (P-II!)

(Not as farce.)

**[What was haig talking about:** SU lack of restraint ("must show control of its client, Cuba": Haig wanted to invade?! "must behave like a responsible power": what, Africa? Cuba in Africa? Reagan: SU search for superiority? (something to this: but not for attack! (Unless—Andropov—preemption !)

CPD had pressured Carter, successfully; then they formed Reagan's administration!

(No one mentions what Carter and then Reagan were doing to the SU in



Afghanistan!

And also, agitation in Poland!

Reagan: like “roll-back.” (Poland? Afghanistan.) SDI (clear departure from nuclear parity), as well as P-II, causes SU to question missile-reduction treaties: walk-out 23 November (!) 1983 of INF and START talks.

Well, COULD P-II reach Moscow or not? Is Fischer right in saying this belief was erroneous? Could it have been placed, or extended in flight (smaller warhead? Third stage?) to reach Moscow? Was it capable of longer-range than had been tested?]

Indeed, a small, five-minute window to launch a successful nuclear counterstrike put the very theory of Mutually Assured Destruction into question. 16

[NO, quite the contrary. MAD could be assured without any need for warning at all. It was D-L preemption, the contradiction of MAD, that was put in question.] Delegation, Dead Hand, sufficient (especially as deterrent, perhaps bluff: though the unwillingness of both sides to announce this did threaten to void deterrence!

Announcing tac nucs and delegation would have deterred invasion and limited war (which would have gone all-out, otherwise!) Announcing Dead Hand would deter decap and surprise attack: all-out war! LOW was not necessary to deterrence IF you announced delegation; it was necessary (only) if you wouldn't announce it!

P'II did NOT put pressure on for LOW: it put pressure on for delegation. (Which Ogarkov wanted, naturally!)

RYaN was not needed for det-I: only for preemption/D-L (which was infeasible, and omnicidal). (BTW, preemption has to be massive.

Retaliation does not have to be, to be deterrent (York); it can even be a bluff, if the survivable capabilities exist.

“Reagan’s early buildup compelled Soviet nuclear strategy to rely on preemption, and hence, made the United States less safe.”

No, it didn’t compel this response: the buildup, plus the possibility of decap, compelled delegation: and if this was announced, you had as much deterrence as you could get.

(Still, like K, Andropov chose not to announce. Sounds dangerous? And if you believe in war-fighting, then you want: 1) secret weapons (as on Cuba); and surprise preemption. Crazy to believe in war-fighting, since mid-Sixties (for either side: crazy always for SU!), and since 1983, nuclear winter.

The problem with stability was not only on the US side (though here again, the US drove the problem: York.)

Six months later, in his State of the Union Address, Reagan stated that to achieve peace, “the Soviet Union must show by deeds as well as words a sincere commitment to respect the rights and sovereignty of the family of nations.”<sup>58</sup>

What the hell was he talking about: unless East Europe (which was indeed tyrannized)? Roll-back? “We will bury you.” (How did that go over in the US?)



What they hadn't faced up to was what it would really take to convince us.<sup>59</sup>

[Well, what did it take? Convince us of what

If in the past the Americans, when speaking about their nuclear weapons, preferred to emphasize the fact that those were, first of all, means of "deterrence," now, by creating the improved missile systems, they are not trying to conceal the fact that those are realistically designed for a future war.

**[But these weapons would not serve "realistically" to win or even survive a nuclear war with the SU. Prevail in the sense of postwar military capability? What use is this without national survival?**

**What Carter—who started this!—and Reagan sought was: the concrete *appearance* that we *possibly believe we might (or would) win* a nuclear war: a "not entirely incredible first-strike capability," or what we might even foolishly consider "a splendid first-strike capability" (HK, Herman Kahn). So SU could "not be sure" we would never strike first (even if we didn't expect or falsely believe SU would attack us).**

**This was supposed to—and conceivably might—cause the SU to be conciliatory, not provocative, in its foreign policy, wishing not to provoke the US to a FS. Or it might—as it did—cause the hawks in the SU to IMITATE it, achieve parity in this, deny US superiority, so the US could tread lightly itself; and meanwhile (especially if this was economically infeasible) prepare to preempt (!) our attack (preempt our preemption or escalation).**

**The opposite of a deterrent effect)! so as to do the best they could if a US attack looked otherwise likely or inevitable. (Even though, “realistically,” preemption would do them no good at all. Still, their military could be counted on to tell themselves they were seeking “prevailing” or “victory.” This is where the doctrines of a "rational" or "limited" nuclear war come from, this is the source of the arguments about the possibility to survive**

<sup>63</sup> Reagan, *An American Life*, 267. <sup>64</sup> Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, 482.

and to win in a protracted nuclear conflict.”<sup>65</sup> Andropov, believing Reagan to have aims of winning a nuclear war, stepped up the Warsaw Pact security establishment.

**21 Alternatively, they could have gone for minimum or maximum deterrence (even explain “nuclear winter”!!! officially. Soviet scientists did know this; but did their leadership believe it? They didn’t declare it! Show their plans, challenge us to show our plans, and analyze their effects! That’s what I hoped for Gorbachev to do, if he’d stayed in. But Andropov could already have done it.) and done their best to disabuse us of any belief or even pretense that we could meaningfully “prevail” (i.e., prevail with national survival.”**

**You don’t show the US they can’t win a nuclear war by imitating their efforts to prepare to win a nuclear war. US inability to win didn’t depend on SU preemption (which they didn’t even announce, anyway: how could they? In other words, they bought no deterrence with their effort and their**



**secret intelligence alert. On the contrary, their continued buildup, themselves (SS-18, etc. SS-20!) made a US preemptive strike more attractive! And RYaN always had the strong possibility of a false alarm! AT LEAST as strong as tactical warning (contrary to their beliefs). It was BASED on a false alarm, in terms of strategic intelligence, as interpreted by Ustinov, Kryuchkov, Andropov, Ogarkov. (ov: bad news). (vs. Khrushchev, Gorbachev, even Brezhnev.... Malenkov is out of line.)**

**They managed to see Hitler in Reagan. And his rhetoric certainly encouraged this, though it was misleading!**

He [Dobrynin] also wrote that none of the General Secretaries for whom he served – Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Chernenko, and Gorbachev – believed “an attack could take place unexpectedly at any moment.” Andropov proved the “probable exception” to this; he recalled a “very private” conversation with Andropov in which he cautioned that **“Reagan is unpredictable. You should expect anything from him.”**<sup>70</sup>

**The effect Nixon wanted! (Did he ever achieve it?!!!) But then he went for détente! It's what StratCom wanted: when was that?**

Ustinov released a pamphlet in May 1982 entitled, “Serving the Country,”

which strongly contradicted Ogarkov's assertions about the viability of nuclear war. Ustinov wrote, “[t]o count on victory in the arms race and in the nuclear war is madness.” Nuclear



war, he wrote, would cause “irreplaceable losses,” and would destroy “entire peoples and their civilizations.”<sup>76</sup>

While it is clear that Andropov and Ustinov were fearful of a Western first strike, it is also clear that leaders of the military were more likely to suspect, attempt to preempt, and believe they could win a nuclear war with the West.

[But our military never talked like Ustinov: nor did their programs or plans reflect such views! They sounded and acted like Ogarkov, i.e. like LeMay and Power. So Pipes wasn't wrong about SU military ! But that didn't mean we should imitate them! (actually, they were imitating us. Both crazy.)

Has NatSecArchive—Burr—ever compared explicitly this SU military planning with ours?! SAC, Stratcom...Pd-59...(= SIOP-62!)

Mine was wrong, infeasible; that didn't mean JCS should have gone back to SIOP-62, or war-fighting, as they did! There was no way to manage the operation of a Doomsday Machine, no way to make SAC operations—on the scale programmed and planned, and sure to escalate to-- being a DM!

A force greater than...100? 200? Less?...that hits 100 (?) cities with thermonuclear weapons IS a DM, and nothing else. If you're planning to do that, or threatening with the capability—you have no other function to be served by

having anything else or more! UNLESS you feel, with basis, that you can't make it sufficiently credible that you will respond to an attack with anything at all, with ten warheads on cities (or five, or twenty) unless you can pretend to believe that you can "limit damage" from a large enemy attack by preempting and decapitation. I.e., pretend to be deluded. (not too hard). (Decap itself doesn't require more than 1-10-50 weapons; but if you want to be able to "dig out" remaining enemy weapons....subs?) (OR hold off their use by your reserves of ten or so warheads). That might help a threat to escalate a conflict unless the other terminates it, Type II; but if the capability is there for that threat, it's probably going to escalate anyway! FU is crazily reckless with or without that threat or capability.

[If he comes at you with a knife, run." If Hitler comes at you with a nuc...? (Nixon vs. NVN: they didn't run). (It simply didn't work. Moratorium helped; but was it necessary? Would they have conceded otherwise? Almost surely not; but there, the expectation that the antiwar movement would keep him, if not from the initial attack (it almost failed), then from expecting to continue them (that it did) would keep them going. Would that have worked if SU had used nucs in Afghanistan? DID THEY CONSIDER IT? NEUTRON BOMBS?

Reagan reacts to KAL-007 shoot-down the way that Carter reacted to the Afghan invasion in Christmas Eve, 1979, four years earlier (to amazement of SU: aside from the fact that Carter had deliberately helped provoke this). Was PSYOPS still going on?! And Reagan knew he was lying that SU had knowingly shot down a civilian airliner and that they did not believe it was on an intelligence mission. (Though such a mission would hardly justify shooting it down!) But that too was a mistake, a false alarm. (See Petrov)



Note (no one mentions!) that AA 83 was exercising an INSANE NATO policy: FU, and escalated second-use (apparently, still a LNW, another insanity!). SU, too, in June 1982 had “seven hour simulation” of nuclear war. (How did that go?) p. 33n

(Note SecDef Brown, earlier, in an exercise, “chasing SU units in Europe with strategic weapons”: and “shoot/look/shoot.” Purpose of PD-59. Odom!)

What did Reagan administration think they were accomplishing, or wanted to, with PSYOPS and Navy?

Jesus Christ!

OK, so all this WAS before KAL-007. We WERE provoking, as in TG 1962, as in Afghanistan 1979. DID US INTELL ANALYSTS KNOW OF THESE PSYOPS, IN INTERPRETING KAL-007 SHOOTDOWN? (THEY DIDN'T IN 1981-82.)

SEE TURK SHOOTDOWN OF RUSSIAN PLANE LAST MONTH, IN TURKISH AIRSPACE (ALLEGEDLY! FOR 17 SECONDS. “NOT A CIVILIAN AIRLINER.” WHAT ABOUT VINCENNES, WHICH NO ONE EVER MENTIONS?)

Communication was simulated with new Pershing II missiles. Pershing IIs were not actually deployed to Europe until 23 November but former CIA analyst Peter Vincent Pry speculates that it is likely that Soviet intelligence believed several Pershing II missiles to have been deployed before their announced date.<sup>105</sup> [WHY WOULDN'T THIS COMMUNICATION DURING EXERCISE HAVE BEEN ENOUGH TO CONVINCE SU THAT P-IIS WERE ALREADY THERE?]

In February 1990 the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board issued a 110-page report which concluded that Soviet leadership “**may have** taken seriously the possibility of a US nuclear strike against the Soviet Union,”

[This in May, 2009; from accounts by Oberdorfer, 1990, and his book. But did it say “may have”? Or “did”? The

difference!

Reagan's belief that **“it was a danger to have a world so heavily armed that one misstep could trigger a great war.”**<sup>130</sup>

Yes: and Jones attributes the effect of Reagan's retrospective knowledge of AA 83 as being [in effect, like the effect of C-II on JFK and K!]

We had many contingency plans for responding to a nuclear attack. But everything would happen so fast that I wondered how much planning or reason could be applied in such a crisis...*Six minutes* to decide how to respond to a blip on a radar scope and decide whether to unleash Armageddon! How could anyone apply reason at a time like that (Reagan 1999)?”<sup>134</sup>

{Here, and not only here, Reagan looks better than others, say, Shultz (or Gates).

[But, like Carter (under pressure from CPD), Reagan did want the capability to make the Soviets believe that we might strike first (as JFK said to Alsop in 62) (and as I, effect, wanted JFK to threaten in October 61; WAS I disturbed when JFK threatened this in February 1962? I don't actually recall, but I should have been, from this. Or Athens/Ann Arbor, which K took as a FS threat! Would knowing this have bothered me? Oh dear. But then, there was no risk of a deliberate preemptive strike by K. Putting missiles in Cuba, though, and threatening a FU or FS, that's what he did do! Like Sovs in 1983: except they didn't threaten, did they, they just prepared: crazily! And that's what K did in Cuba!)

So maybe what US officials couldn't believe was that the SU would believe we would strike first in a surprise attack when there was no ongoing conflict or public crisis. So they didn't worry or imagine that our moves (even PSYOPS!) could be interpreted as strengthening such an expectation! And did Reagan EVER discover that preemption was Andropov's preferred response to that: not just, “going on alert,” so as to retaliate! He knew the latter, itself, was dangerous (see Petrov, and Perroots), as it was; but the SU response to their fears was even more dangerous, by far. Not only did



Reagan not imagine THAT: I don't think anyone has commented on the failure of US leaders OR INTELL to consider that, until the PFIAB Report, 1990. (Who saw that? Pry? Gates did, presumably Reagan did (briefed? He didn't read a 100-page report, did he?) who in the Clinton administration read it?!!! NOW, in Obama administration? Anyone earlier???)

tensions and nuclear fear of 1983 led the president who **believed the prophecy of Armageddon would be fulfilled by a nuclear apocalypse, [is this the only mention of this fact in all these discussions? Significance? Reexamine that!!]** stated that **"MAD policy was madness,"** and wrote of civilization's regression due to nuclear weapons, to seek a policy toward the USSR which reduced, rather than increased, the risk of nuclear war.<sup>136</sup>

There was never a MAD policy. MAD would be the result of either, or both, US and SU plans from 1964 on (and earlier US plans), even though both were creating forces and strategies which they hoped, delusionally, might avoid MAD. (McNamara may have hoped for a "lower degree of MAD" than if no D-L CF were attempted; likewise, I suppose, other SAC planners later, with some exceptions, especially those who counted on decap. ) Reagan wanted to avoid MAD in a nuclear war by SDI (he was right that nothing else would do it in a war; indeed, SDI with a US FS might actually have achieved D-L, as McNamara wanted; not "an acceptable outcome" but less catastrophic than otherwise: EXCEPT for nuclear winter, which our own strikes would create!!! But he did also want nuclear abolition! Along with SDI to handle rogues, hidden weapons. (That's not crazy, wrt ICBMs alone, IF you got abolition). (But as Gorbachev, if they abandoned the ABM Treaty, what was likely to result was a US FS force, not even a reduced offensive force.)

What was crazy was not MAD as a policy in nuclear war (realistically, that was inescapable, unless forces were reduced to ten or so), but a readiness to threaten nuclear war, to preempt, to LOW, or to respond at all even to a nuclear attack, carrying out any nuclear plans at all. If SDI could be feasible, and was effectively installed, then it would be an alternative to MAD (or, the US would have regained a monopoly, not just superiority, wrt ICBMs (only!). But that alternative to MAD didn't exist, any more than any of the others (including HAK's LNW: or the European conflict implied by SS-20s and P-

IIs, in the minds of some).

On 15 November 1983, National Intelligence Officer Major General Edward B. Atkeson met with General Richard G. Stilwell to discuss Soviet military operational analysis. **I contend it is very likely this meeting concerned the Soviet Union's perceptions of Able Archer 83.**

**[CHECK]** On 18 November, McFarlane received a Top Secret letter from Prime Minister Thatcher for President Reagan, the letter **remains classified**. **[StiLL?]** On the cover letter, McFarlane handwrote, "We should get something out today." It is plausible Thatcher was passing Reagan one of Gordievsky's reports

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46

was on the President's mind as he travelled throughout Asia from 8-14 November. **[But McFarlane briefed him on SU nuclear activity days after Able Archer. Days after Nov. 11? On the flight?]** The two spoke about the

A most sobering experience with Cap W[einberger] and Gen. Vessey in the situation room—a briefing on our complete plan in the event of a nuclear attack.<sup>142</sup> **[WAS THIS HIS FIRST BRIEFING ON THE SIOP? WHEN WAS THAT?]**

P. 48: Nov. 19 meeting: US policy *would not* challenge the legitimacy of the Soviet system, work towards military superiority, or attempt to force the collapse of the Soviet system.

**[Are these challenges precisely what Putin believes the US is conducting right now, with respect to his regime?**



**[Carter intended not to seek military superiority: (see BB on PD-59) but his buildup and PD-59 were seen as precisely that!]**

**p. 50AA seems to have affected Reagan as C-II did JFK and K! His new policy on SU, delivered Jan. 16, 1994 (delayed from Dec. 20 on advice from Nancy Reagan's astrologer) was meant like American University speech. Openings to Gromyko from Shultz. Call for ending to existential danger (like Andropov to Harriman in June, 1983).**

Three years had taught me something surprising about the Russians: Many people at the top of the Soviet hierarchy were genuinely afraid of America and Americans. Perhaps this shouldn't have surprised me, but it did.... During my first years in Washington, I think many of us in the administration took it for granted that the Russians, like ourselves considered it unthinkable that the United States would launch a first strike against them. But the more experience I had with Soviet leaders and other heads of state who knew them, the more I began to realize that many Soviet officials feared us not only as adversaries but as potential aggressors who might hurl nuclear weapons at them in a first strike.<sup>152</sup>

**[Still no clear awareness that the Soviets might have launched a preemptive strike themselves, preempting our attack. When did this become clear? Gordievsky, or not?]**

Less effect in SU. RYAN continued "until end of SU." (Beyond? Pry: 1991, Primakov;

but longer?]) HAVE THEY EVER RENOUNCED PREEMPTION? HAVE WE? NO! WE WON'T GET RID OF MM UNTIL WE RENOUNCED PREEMPTION!

[12/23/2015: And we won't get of preemption—on either side!—until we're ready to let go of Minuteman III, our land-based missiles: forsaking “parity” as well as preemption (LOW of land-based missiles, at least) and damage-limiting (which would still require greatly reducing the number of Trident warheads! There is a “triad” of: MM-III, damage-limiting, preemption. (I.E., IN EFFECT, D-L: WITHOUT SAYING SO! NOT JUST LOW! NFS, PERIOD! SO THEN, NO FS FROM ESCALATION, EITHER! WE CAN EVEN GIVE UMBRELLA TO NNWS (GERMANY? WHO NEEDS IT? JAPAN? WHAT IF THEY GET NUCS SOON? SHOULD WE KEEP PREEMPTION JUST FOR THAT? BUT...UKRAINE! SYRIA! (NO! UKRAINE, NO! NFS, FOR EITHER! FU AS A DECLARATORY DOCTRINE, DETERRENCE: MADNESS! IT REQUIRES A FS CAPABILITY, ON BOTH SIDES! INSTABILITY! AS IN AA 83, ON BOTH SIDES! (IF PERROOTS HAD GONE TO FULL ALERT...SEE STEINBRUNNER).

AFTER ALL, IF AA 83 SCENARIO HAD BEEN FOR REAL—THE WORLD WOULD HAVE BLOWN UP FOR THAT REASON, WITHOUT A US FS OR EVEN THE SOVIETS EXPECTING A FS! FU AGAINST EACH OTHER—CRAZY!

YES, US PRESIDENT CAN BE, AND HAS BEEN, PERCEIVED AS MAD, UNPREDICTABLE, CAPABLE OF SURPRISE FS AS WELL AS FU. HOW DID THAT WORK OUT? (NEAR SU PREEMPTION!) (YES, IF PREEMPTION WERE SEEN AS MAD BY the Soviets/Russians, IT WOULDN'T BE AS DANGEROUS FOR THE US TO BE SEEN AS MADLY READY TO DO IT. UNFORTUNATELY, SU LEADERS WERE ABLE TO BE JUST AS MAD—AND UNPREDICTABLE TO US, WITHOUT OUR REALIZING IT! AN “UNKNOWN UNKNOWN”! (WHEREAS ANDROPOV SAW REAGAN AS BEING A KNOWN UNKNOWN! “Unpredictable, crazy.”)

A 30 November 1983 memorandum entitled “Why Is the World so Dangerous?” circulated amongst Reagan administration principals.<sup>159</sup> Had the principals answered honestly, they would have said that the danger was due, in part, to the US policies which had helped to make it so. US foreign policy played a role in the 1983 Soviet-American War Scare. American curtailment of formal and informal contacts with the Soviets, introduction of newer, balance-shifting nuclear weapons and defense systems, and frequent rhetorical pledges to destroy communism, enflamed Soviet



fears of a United States nuclear attack and pushed the world closer to the brink.

The superpower intelligence agencies also bore responsibility for this danger. The history of the 1983 War Scare is lauding to neither the CIA nor KGB. **Both sides were fundamentally wrong in their assumptions. [LIKE C-II!]** Operation RYAN stands as a dubious example of the flawed intelligence which arrives from an agency which molds its evidence to fit predetermined conclusions. The Moscow Center asked its agents only for binary information, not its agents' opinions of what the information they had collected meant. There was no Western intention to launch a first strike; therefore ordering agents to detect one was remiss.

<sup>159</sup> The memorandum concluded the world was dangerous because the **Soviet Union was "running out of time."** It did not mention any US contribution to the danger. **[Don't we think, correctly, that Putin is running out of time? And we are contributing to his fears. What should we learn about what effect this may have on risk? More than I would have thought earlier!]** 30 November, 1983, Memo from Herbert E. Meyer Vice Chairman, National Intelligence Counsel for Director and Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, "Why is the World so Dangerous?" in CIA Records Search Tool, National Archives and Records Administration NARA, College Park, MD.

American intelligence also failed to believe the obvious. It refused to accept that the West's vast increase in nuclear strength combined with Reagan's harsh rhetoric made some in the Soviet Union believe that a Western nuclear strike was a possibility. This ignorance or whitewashing of genuine Soviet fear led to the continuation of confrontational policies which could have caused a desperate Soviet Union to lash out against the West. American intelligence believed there was virtually no chance of nuclear war and refused to

conceive that its adversary could think otherwise.

Finally, the increased risk of nuclear miscalculation during Able Archer 83 chinks the theory of nuclear deterrence **[YES: e.g., AJW theory]** and idea of the “long peace.” **[][YES]** The 1983 War Scare proves that the Cold War did not slowly wind down after the Cuban Missile Crisis.**[YES]** Rather, the danger of nuclear confrontation remained constant,**[NO: détente; and 1984-91; it fluctuated]** and at times – including during Able Archer 83 – escalated.**[YES]** By 1983, each side had only a *six minute* window to survive a nuclear attack.**[NO: forces sufficient for Type I Deterrent would survive without warning; societies would not survive no matter how much warning (though some post-attack nuclear capability might survive, enough to “prevail”).]** Despite “nuclear learning,” and game theories, both of the superpowers became more unsafe as the Cold War progressed.**[YES: and despite arms control negotiations and agreements.]** While the USA and USSR maintained nuclear parity, both lacked nuclear security. **[YES]** The explanation to this nuclear paradox is simple: **Theories don’t shape the course of human events; men do.[NOT ENTIRELY: E.G., IT WAS SIMPLY A WRONG THEORY THAT PARITY WAS SUFFICIENT FOR DETERRENCE. ALSO, A THEORY THAT PREEMPTION WAS ADVANTAGEOUS, THAT DAMAGE-LIMITING IS POSSIBLE AND SIGNIFICANT, WORTH TAKING A RISK—OF ANNIHILATION—FOR.]** Reagan was right when he wrote that the Soviet attack on KAL 007 negated “the moral precepts which guide human relations everywhere;”**[NO he wasn’t; the US acted on the very same moral precepts when the Vincennes shot down an Iranian airliner. “Self-defense,” plus false**



**alarm.]** it also reaffirmed the danger of human irrationality.<sup>160</sup> [NO, this didn't: see above] Cold War history must recount that human unpredictability was what caused the danger of nuclear war to be **ever-present [YES]** throughout the long peace— and, on more than one occasion, dangerously close.

<sup>160</sup> Reagan, *American Live*, 548.

Has Jones compared his 2006 paper to the 2015 conclusions? How has PFIAB Report affected his conclusions since 2006? Other sources? To Fischer? To Pry?

2. Compare C-II and aa 83.

3. Compare to present. (See Pry)

12/8/15 9:00 PM

DE Comments on Part II

The 1983 War Scare: "The Last Paroxysm" of the Cold War Part II  
<http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB427/>

As a result of Orange advance, its persistent use of chemical weapons, and its clear intentions to rapidly commit second echelon forces, SACEUR requested political guidance on the use of nuclear weapons early on Day 1 of the exercise (7 November 1983)..."

"Blue's use of nuclear weapons did not stop Orange's aggression.[NO MENTION OF ORANGE/SU NUCLEAR RESPONSE: SMALL OR LARGE! THOUGH IN FACT EASTERN AIRFIELDS WERE ON NUCLEAR ALERT BECAUSE OF THE EXERCISE!] Therefore, SACEUR requested follow-on use of nuclear weapons late on 9 November. This request was approved in the afternoon of 10 November and follow-on use of nuclear weapons was executed on the morning of 11 November. That was the final day of the exercise, which ended in accordance with the long-planned schedule." [AGAIN: NO CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSE?! OR OF RESPONSE TO RESPONSE, IF ANY OF THE HEADQUARTERS SURVIVED! NO EXPLOSION TO ALL-OUT WAR! ]

The summary also lists the units whose headquarters participated in Able Archer 83. Response cells from the United States, United Kingdom, and NATO (no other nations) participated in the exercise. The Joint Chiefs of Staff in the US and Ministry of Defense in the UK participated "with small response cells." The NATO response cell was simulated by the



Exercise Directing Staff.

The NATO summary concludes by stating the historian interviewed "a number of senior participants in Exercise Able Archer 83" in 2006 and that "none of them recalled any 'war scare' or even unusual Soviet reaction to the exercise. Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Terry, the Deputy SACEUR who played the role of SACEUR during Able Archer 83, stated quite categorically that 'no such scare arose at that time.'"

The summary does not mention or refute the accounts published in the CIA's *Studies in Intelligence* or the May 1984 Special National Intelligence Estimate which reported the "Assumption by Soviet air units in Germany and Poland from [date redacted] November 1983 of high alert status with readying of nuclear strike forces as NATO conducted 'Able Archer 83' a nuclear release command post exercise." [3] The Archive's third and final War Scare posting will included declassified US Department of State documents showing that the US "sanitized" (removed) references to these Soviet responses to Able Archer 83 in the intelligence reports they shared with their NATO allies. **[Thus, the US misled NATO allies, except the UK, as to what even the exercise showed about the likely consequences of "transitioning" to nuclear! Or of the likelihood that the SU, following the exercise, would plan on using tac nucs *before* NATO did (which they probably planned earlier anyway: but this would confirm them!)]** [How could this possibly have been NATO planning for this scenario in 1983! Except as a threat of madness (all too plausible\_) to the Soviets: which could either deter them from fighting in the first place (the aim, presumably) or determine them, madly, to preempt, sooner (like now) rather than later. What all these revelations

**show is that the latter response was “on the table” in the SU, though it “should” not have been. And uprisings in the East were dangerous to both sides.**

To SHAPE, the Soviets were "huffing and puffing" (to borrow President Reagan's phrase) in late 1983, and were not genuinely afraid of a NATO nuclear first strike.

According to the documents published by Gordievsky, on November 5, 1983, Moscow Center sent the London residency a telegram that opened by stating, "In response to your request we are sending you the information which the Centre has regarding possible Operations by the USA and its allies on British territory in preparations for RYaN." <sup>[6]</sup>

The telegram continued, "surprise is the key element in the main adversary's [United States'] plans and preparations for war in today's conditions. As a result it can be assumed that the period of time from the moment when the preliminary decision for RYaN is taken, up to the order to deliver the strike will be of very short duration, possibly 7-10 days." The Center instructed agents to monitor "possible contacts and consultations between the United States government and British leadership," (including at 13 Ministry of Defense buildings), and warned them to watch for "announcements of military alert in units and at bases," and the "appearance of new channels of communications." The beginning of Able Archer 83 included at least some of these indicators. Presumably an apt intelligence officer would have concluded, as did Gordievsky, that despite these indicators Able Archer 83 was in all likelihood a nuclear drill.

Then, Gordievsky writes, on November 8 or 9, he "was not sure which," flash telegrams were sent to both KGB and GRU residencies in Western Europe reporting "an alert on US bases." <sup>[7]</sup> The flash telegrams "clearly implied that one of several possible explanations for the (non-existent) alert was that the countdown to a nuclear first strike had actually begun."

According to the SHAPE summary, the morning of November 8 was when SACEUR requested "initial limited use of nuclear weapons against pre-selected fixed targets. Request [was] approved by political authorities (being simulated by response cells [including "small cells" in the UK and US]) in the evening, and the weapons were employed on the morning of 9 November."

Of course, there were no plans for a Western first strike. But as General Secretary Yuri Andropov told the US envoy Averell Harriman in June 1983, the tense relations between superpowers (and six-minute nuclear response times) meant that the miscalculation of a nonexistent attack could still present a genuine danger.

Additionally, Soviet military doctrine held that a nuclear attack could be effectively obscured by war games or military exercises. <sup>[8]</sup>

In a key exchange of this 1990 interview, Akhromeyev tells Oberdorfer that he did not remember "Able Archer 83" but that "we believed the most dangerous military exercises are [were] Autumn Forge and Reforger. These are [were] the NATO exercise in Europe."



While Akhromeyev states that he felt no "immediate threat of war," he adds: "I must tell you that I personally and many of the people that I know had a different opinion of the United States in 1983 than I have today [1990]. I considered that the United States is [was] pressing for world supremacy ... And I considered that as a result of this situation there can [could] be a war between the Soviet Union and the United States on the initiative of the United States."<sup>[10]</sup>

**Document 15: Unpublished Interview with former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, October 18, 1989.**

**Source: Princeton University, Mudd Manuscript Library, Don Oberdorfer Papers 1983-1990, Series 3, Research Documents Files.**

In an interview with Don Oberdorfer, former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger said that Able Archer 83 "involved the timing of the release of nuclear weapons, the chain of command -who would have the authority, how quickly could it come back here and go back over there-all that sort of thing. It was a standard exercise."

He does, however, lend credence to Soviet Marshal Akhromeyev's feeling that these large military exercises -specifically Autumn Forge and Reforger- were "the most dangerous." "But I do remember," Weinberger continued, "and I do know, because I felt the same way on our side - that it is sometimes quite difficult to tell the difference between an exercise and the beginning - the raising of indicators that we watch all the time every day, every hour." He cited his anxiety over a North Korean exercise because: "they were moving a hell of a lot of stuff in position and everybody knew it was just a maneuver and it was an annual exercise, but I got quite alarmed, because I kept saying 'What if it isn't? We've lost about five days of time.' So the difference between a realistic exercise or maneuver and what could be preparations for an attack, that line is sometimes quite blurred."

**Document 16: Unpublished Interview with former National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane, undated but in 1989 or 1990.**

**Source: Princeton University, Mudd Manuscript Library, Don Oberdorfer Papers 1983-1990, Series 3, Research Documents Files.**

McFarlane describes the nuclear aspect of Able Archer 83 to Oberdorfer as "very rare ... We've always had Reforger and Crested Cap for a generation. But this kind of thing where you go through the escalatory steps to general war — I don't remember any since the '60s in fact."

McFarlane also repeated the controversial claim that someone, "probably Vic Boverie and the Defense people ... rais[ed] a concern that in the context of other reports we had had of anxiety on the part of the Russians, that for us to conduct an exercise like this with principals in place could be alarming. And I thought that was a valid concern."

McFarlane continued: "And I talked to Cap [Weinberger] about it and Cap agreed that there ought to be some very obvious missing players and other ways of telling that this was clearly an exercise, and did [that]. And there were, I think if you'll check back, some folks, notably the President, Vice President and the Chiefs [who did not participate], one of the commanders in EUCOM wasn't playing."

This assertion has received much push back. In his interview, Weinberger stated that "I don't remember anything about that. McFarlane's memory — I guess the kindest way to phrase it — exceeds mine in many instances."<sup>[11]</sup>

**Document 17: Office of the Secretary of Defense, Memorandum From Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, "Subject: Significant Military Exercise NIGHT TRAIN 84," December 8, 1983, Secret.**

**Source: Reagan Presidential Library, Jack Matlock Files, b. 2 [90888], f: "Matlock Chron Dec 1983 (1 of 2) .**

A coda to the declassified descriptions of Exercises Autumn Forge 83, Reforger 83 and Able Archer 83 is this December 8, 1983 memo from General Colin Powell, then military assistant to the Secretary of Defense. Powell was writing about the upcoming US-Canadian military exercise Night Train 84, conducted from 5-13 April 1984.

In his memo, Powell warned, "Conduct of a worldwide nuclear exercise could show strength of purpose. On the other hand, it could be perceived as showing an intent for use of nuclear weapons. It could have the potential to affect US/USSR strategic arms reduction negotiations or bilateral US/USSR strategic arms reduction negotiations or bilateral US/USSR summit preparations should either of these be in progress."

No analogous brief has been found for Autumn Forge 83, Reforger 83, or Able Archer 83.



12/8/15 9:28 PM  
DE comments on Part III

## THE DOCUMENTS

**Document 1: Department of Defense and Central Intelligence Agency, "US and Soviet Strategic Forces," Joint Net Assessment, November 14, 1983, Top Secret.**

**Source: Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act release.**

The first Joint Net Assessment of the Soviet Union, in production for months if not years, was completed just after the conclusion of Able Archer 83. The purpose of the Joint Net Assessment was to present policy makers a comprehensive and accurate report of current and projected strategic strengths and weaknesses of the Soviet Union and United States.

The Joint Net Assessment found that as of November 1983, "the strategic nuclear balance is probably adequate to deter a direct nuclear attack on the United States or a major attack on Europe." The assessment warned that the most likely threat to U.S. interests would be Soviet exploitation of possible "crises" when they would challenge U.S. interests in "friendly or client state[s] in the Third World," possibly analogous to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. This could develop as "a period of crisis, the conventional phase of a theater war, a limited theater nuclear war, [and] large-scale nuclear strikes." This is precisely the nuclear scenario that Exercise Autumn Forge 83 and Able Archer 83 wargamed.

The assessment did not, however, warn of the possibility of nuclear war through Soviet "miscalculation" or errant preemptive strikes, despite "a clear [Soviet] preference for preemption." This may have been because, as the report noted, "there has been limited attention given in our analyses to the factors that the Soviets would regard as most important. An implicit assumption has been that Soviet assessments are similar to our own."

The assessment reported an additional U.S. vulnerability: "We do not know what would convince them [the Soviets] that a US strike was imminent."

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DE Comments on BB 426

The 1983 War Scare: "The Last Paroxysm" of the Cold War Part I

Soviet "Huffing and Puffing?" "Crying Wolf?" "Rattling Pots and Pans?" or "A Real Worry That We Could Come into Conflict through Miscalculation?"

Largest On-Line Set of Primary Sources on "The Last Paroxysm" of the Cold War Suggests ... Both

National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 426

PART 1 OF 3 POSTINGS

Posted – May 16, 2013

Edited by Nate Jones

Assisted by Lauren Harper

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--Get Time cover story, Dec. 83, Andropov and Reagan, Men of the year (!)

--What were the various purposes of Autumn Forge 83, Reforger 83 (movement of 19,000 US troops by air, radio-silence), and above all, Able Archer 83? Why then, in its unprecedented aspects and scale? What impression was it supposed to make on SU?

Why movement to nuclear war in 1983?!!!

What if that nuclear aspect had been known to anti-nuclear movement in US (Central Park, June 1982) or to Europe? (500,000 protest in Bonn!)

Was it known?

Term first known with "the first public exposé of the incident in an October 16, 1988, Sunday Telegraph article entitled "Brink of World War III: When the World Almost Went to War."



Did Andropov make any effort to get the exercise called off? Or, SU observers? How much did SU intell find out—before, during, after—of details of scenario, or nuclear aspect? Any SU protest over its nature? If they knew of nuclear aspect, would they have made it public? Protested?

On the other hand, if he really considered preempting it, did it make sense to denounce it—or Reagan—so much beforehand, signaling his fear, anxiety?

Volume four of the National Security Agency's heavily redacted study on cryptology during the Cold War (see [here](#) for earlier volumes), released to the National Security Archive through the FOIA, is devoted to the Reagan era. The NSA starkly notes that "[t]he Reagan administration marked the height of the Cold War. The president referred to the Soviet Union as the Evil Empire, and was determined to spend it into the ground. The Politburo reciprocated, and the rhetoric on both sides, especially during the first Reagan administration, drove the hysteria. Some called it the Second Cold War. The period 1982-1984 marked the most dangerous Soviet-American confrontation since the Cuban Missile Crisis."

#### (U) The Second Cold War

(U) The most distinguishable characteristic of American foreign policy during the Reagan administration was hard-line anticommunism. Reagan's views were so well-known that they apparently induced great consternation in Moscow. The Soviet view of Reagan was confirmed when, barely two months into his first term, Reagan referred to the USSR as the "focus of evil," and seized every opportunity to brand the Soviet Union as an international outlaw. The Soviets reciprocated by launching a propaganda blitz, at one point comparing Reagan to Hitler. This was not in the spirit of detente.<sup>14</sup>

#### (U) Yuri Andropov

(U) Militarily, the Reagan administration opened a campaign of psychological military warfare. American aircraft, especially from the Strategic Air Command, probed East Bloc borders in increasingly provocative flights. SAC sent B-52 flights over the North Pole to see what the Soviet reaction would be. The Navy was by all odds the most daring, however. Two huge naval exercises— one near the Murmansk coast in 1981, the other in the Sea of Okhotsk in April of 1983 —served notice that Allied naval forces would intrude into what the Soviets had come to regard as their own private lakes. The Navy also delighted in

using sophisticated evasion techniques to elude the USSR's ocean reconnaissance systems. These techniques would frequently be turned against the Soviets in high-tech

sub- shadowing exercises. 15

(U) These actions were calculated to induce paranoia, and they did. In early 1981, KGB chief Yuri Andropov, who had apparently come

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Document 3: CIA Studies in Intelligence article by Benjamin B. Fischer, "The 1983 War Scare in US-Soviet Relations," Undated, circa 1996, Secret.

Source: Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act release.

Two CIA histories -one declassified and redacted, the other unclassified- chronicle the geopolitical factors that made the War Scare "the most dangerous Soviet-American confrontation since the Cuban Missile Crisis."

"The 1983 War Scare in US-Soviet Relations," by Ben B. Fischer, a History Fellow at the CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence, was authored for the CIA's classified in-house journal, Studies in Intelligence — likely prior to the presentation of his longer, unclassified, "A Cold War Conundrum," although its date is redacted. "The 1983 War Scare in US-Soviet Relations" concludes that Soviet fears of a preemptive U.S. nuclear strike, "while exaggerated, were scarcely insane." Fischer's account starkly claims that the U.S. dismissal of legitimate Soviet fears, including of a "decapitating" nuclear strike, left the U.S. vulnerable to the possibility that they could lead to very real dangers, including a preemptive Soviet nuclear strike based purely on misinformation.

After President Reagan's March 1983 assertion that the USSR had violated a self-imposed moratorium on deploying intermediate-range SS-20 missiles facing Western Europe, General Secretary Andropov suggested that Reagan was "insane and a liar," repeatedly compared him to Hitler, and espoused rhetoric that made it seem war was imminent. Fischer writes that U.S. officials gave little credence to Soviet concerns — or dismissed them as propaganda — and argues that the fears were more nuanced than mere political pandering, as evidenced by Operation RYaN.

According to Fischer's account, based largely on the MI6 and CIA asset Oleg Gordievsky, in 1981 the Soviet Union launched Operation RYaN, a combined intelligence effort among the KGB and their GRU (military intelligence) counterparts, to monitor indications and warnings of U.S. war-planning, and by 1983 RYaN had acquired "an especial degree of urgency." RYaN was, according to Fischer, "for real," and was in part a likely byproduct of American PSYOP tactics conducted throughout the previous two years.



The report also establishes — for the first time — that another CIA source was, at least partially, corroborating Gordievsky's reporting. This Czechoslovak intelligence officer — who worked closely with the KGB on RYaN — "noted that his counterparts were obsessed with the historical parallel between 1941 and 1983. He believed this feeling was almost visceral, not intellectual, and deeply affected Soviet thinking."

This CIA history also reveals that the U.S. military had been probing Soviet airspace to pinpoint vulnerabilities since the beginning of the Reagan administration, and that in 1981 the U.S. Navy led an armada of 83 ships through Soviet waters, effectively eluding "the USSR's massive ocean reconnaissance system and early-warning systems." In addition to the PSYOP exercises, and in the heated aftermath of the KAL 007 tragedy of September 1, 1983, the U.S. Navy flew aircraft 20 miles inside Soviet airspace, prompting Andropov to issue orders that "any aircraft discovered in Soviet airspace be shot down. Air-defense commanders were warned that if they refused to execute Andropov's order, they would be dismissed." Tensions, and Moscow's suspicions of a possible U.S. attack, were high. These events rattled Soviet leaders, already aware that their technological capabilities were lagging behind the U.S., and they ramped up Operation RYaN efforts.

Fischer writes that as the Soviets were conducting Operation RYaN, the U.S. began Able Archer 83, an annual NATO command post exercise that the Soviets were familiar with. However, Gordievsky told MI6 that during Able Archer 83, Moscow incorrectly informed its KGB and GRU stations that U.S. forces were mobilizing in Europe. Air bases in East Germany and Poland were put on alert "for the first and last time during the Cold War." Fischer concludes that Operation RYaN and the urgency to collect intelligence on U.S. capabilities was more than what Reagan called "huffing and puffing." He adds that the fear was magnified by the growing technological disparity between the two superpowers, and describes Able Archer 83 as the "last paroxysm at the end of the Cold War."

Document 4: Central Intelligence Agency Intelligence Monograph by Benjamin B. Fischer, "A Cold War Conundrum: The 1983 Soviet War Scare," September 1997, Unclassified.

Source: CIA Electronic Reading Room.

A second, well-circulated historical monograph published by Ben B. Fischer, "A Cold War Conundrum: The 1983 Soviet War Scare" in the CIA's An Intelligence Monograph series, is a longer, unclassified update of his classified piece, "The 1983 War Scare in US-Soviet Relations" (see previous document). With a careful reading, "A Cold War Conundrum" gives insight into what the CIA censored from his earlier, redacted Studies in Intelligence piece. While much of the information is the same, the CIA likely redacted passages about the Soviet's recognition of their own capabilities, their feelings of vulnerability surrounding recent international disappointments, Oleg Gordievsky's credibility, and the competence of MI6.

This unclassified article also describes a 1981 KGB estimate of world trends, redacted from the earlier piece, that concludes that the "USSR in effect was losing — and the US was winning — the Cold War." While Fischer's redacted article refers to the Soviets' acknowledgment of an unfavorable "correlation of world forces," this unclassified article underscores the USSR's feelings of vulnerability as it was caught in "its own version of America's Vietnam quagmire" in Afghanistan, was being drained economically by Cuba, and was struggling to support the pro-Soviet regimes in Angola and Nicaragua. These vulnerabilities were likely amplified by a visible shift in U.S. public opinion, which now supported the "largest peacetime defense buildup in the nation's history."

Document 7: Interview with Viktor M. Surikov, Deputy Director of the Central Scientific Research Institute, by John G. Hines, September 11, 1993 in *Soviet Intentions 1965-1985: Volume II Soviet Post-Cold War Testimonial Evidence*, by John G. Hines, Ellis M. Mishulovich, of BDM Federal, INC. for the Office of the Secretary of Defense Net Assessment. Unclassified with portions "retroactively" classified.

Source: Defense Department Freedom of Information Act release.

In 1995, the Pentagon contractor, BDM Corporation, prepared a two-volume study on *Soviet Intentions, 1965-1985*, based on an extraordinarily revealing series of interviews with former senior Soviet defense officials — "unhappy Cold Warriors" — during the final days of the Soviet Union. The interviews contain candid Soviet reflections on the 1983 War Scare.

One interviewee, Viktor Surikov, who had over 30 years experience building, testing, and analyzing military missiles and related systems, acknowledged that a shift toward preemption had occurred on the Soviet side as well. Surikov challenged his interviewer, John Hines, alleging that "U.S. strategy and posture was to strike first in a crisis in order to minimize damage to the U.S. He added that U.S. analysts had concluded that there were tremendous differences in levels of damage to the U.S. under conditions where the U.S. succeeded in successfully preemptively striking Soviet missiles and control systems before they launched versus under conditions of a simultaneous exchange or U.S. retaliation. He said, 'John, if you deny that, then either you're ignorant about your own posture or you're lying to me.' I acknowledged that the U.S. certainly had done such analysis." [I.e., a crisis consisting of ongoing limited war, nuclear FU, or imminent war, would lead to "preemption" in the absence of tac warning: escalation.

Surikov believed that the basic Soviet nuclear position and posture was also preemption. Soviet General Valentin Varennikov, who served on the General Staff, corroborates this dangerous change in nuclear warfighting. He recounts that in 1983, the Soviet military conducted its own exercise, Zapad (West) 83, which, "prepared (for the first time since the Second World War) for a situation where our armed forces obtained reliable data of [an adversary's] decision made by highest military and political leadership to launch a surprise attack, using all possible firepower (artillery, aviation, etc.) against us. In response, we conducted offensive operations to disrupt the enemy attack and defeat its troops. That is, a preemptive strike."<sup>[1]</sup>



Gordievsky wrote in 1991, that "In May of 1981 the ageing Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev denounced Reagan's policies in a secret address to a major KGB conference in Moscow. The most dramatic speech, however, was given by Yuri Andropov, [then] Chairman of the KGB ... The new American administration, he declared, was actively preparing for nuclear war. To the astonishment of his audience, Andropov then announced that, by a decision of the Politburo, the KGB and GRU were for the first time to cooperate in a worldwide intelligence operation codenamed RYaN." <sup>[12]</sup>

[SO: **Why was the Reagan administration preparing for nuclear war? Really, for deterrence? (Then, it failed! It raised chance of being attacked! Attacked in the way our own plans called for! (?) To out-spend SU? Again...(it may have achieved this, with some effect: but at risk to Type I deterrence!) And why was Type II needed at all in 1984?!**]

**[Window of vulnerability---CPD, 1979-80? Poland?) (Pipes) (and Brzezinski?)**

Document 5: Department of State memo from Frank H. Perez, Office of Strategic and General Research at the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, to Leonard Weiss, Deputy Director for Functional Research at the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, "Subject: Thoughts on Launch-on-warning," January 29, 1971, Secret.

Source: National Archives, RG 59, Subject-Numeric Files, 1970-1973, Def 12 USSR January 29, 1971, Secret, and related documents .

Document 6: Secretary of Defense to President Carter, " False Alerts ," July 12, 1980, Top Secret, excised copy, and related documents .

Source: Source: Defense Department Freedom of Information Act release.

The primary impetus for Operation RYaN was the Soviet fear of a preemptive nuclear strike driven by both superpowers' reliance on Launch-on-Warning nuclear postures, combined with the planned deployment of Pershing II missiles that could reach Moscow from West Germany in six minutes.<sup>[7]</sup> This led to Soviet worries of a "decapitating first

strike" and the initiation of Operation RYaN to detect, and possibly preempt this first strike before its launch.

U.S. national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski was the victim of one terrifying example proving the danger posed by shrinking warning times, which he recounted to his aide, Robert Gates. Gates, who later served as director of Central Intelligence and secretary of defense, recounted in his memoirs that on November 9, 1979, Brzezinski "was awakened at three in the morning by [military assistant William] Odom, who told him that some 250 Soviet missiles had been launched against the United States. Brzezinski knew that the President's decision time to order retaliation was from three to seven minutes .... Thus he told Odom he would stand by for a further call to confirm Soviet launch and the intended targets before calling the President. Brzezinski was convinced we had to hit back and told Odom to confirm that the Strategic Air Command was launching its planes. When Odom called back, he reported that ... 2,200 missiles had been launched — it was an all — out attack. One minute before Brzezinski intended to call the President, Odom called a third time to say that other warning systems were not reporting Soviet launches. Sitting alone in the middle of the night, Brzezinski had not awakened his wife, reckoning that everyone would be dead in half an hour. It had been a false alarm. Someone had mistakenly put military exercise tapes into the computer system." [8] In 1980 alone, U.S. warning systems generated three more false alerts.

Valentin Falin, a high ranking Soviet official in the Foreign Ministry, described Soviet anxieties in the Central Committee's prominent journal, *Kommunist*. He wrote that with the deployment of Pershing II missiles in 1983, "[i]mperialism has decided to limit both the time and the space of the USSR and for all the world of socialism, to just five minutes for contemplation in a crisis situation."<sup>[9]</sup>

President Reagan also realized this danger, writing in his memoirs, "We had many contingency plans for responding to a nuclear attack. But everything would happen so fast that I wondered how much planning or reason could be applied in such a crisis ... Six minutes to decide how to respond to a blip on a radar scope and decide whether to unleash Armageddon! How could anyone apply reason at a time like that?"<sup>[10]</sup>

Doc. 9: According to Gordievsky, each station chief in "Western countries, Japan, and some states in the Third World" received an Operation RYaN directive. Each was addressed by name, labeled "strictly personal," and was designated to be kept in a special file. The directive stated:

"The objective of the assignment is to see that the Residency works systematically to uncover any plans in preparation by the main adversary [USA] for RYaN and to organize a continual watch to be kept for indications of a **decision** being taken to use nuclear weapons against the USSR or immediate **preparations being made for a nuclear missile attack.**" <sup>[13]</sup>

**I.e. "preemption" was to take place on evidence of a "decision" or "preparations," NOT once attack was being launched! P-II simply didn't allow time for the latter! Nor would Dead Hand allow for significant damage-limiting! (Didn't SAC/JCS reach that same conclusion?)**



Many of the assigned observations would have been very poor indicators of a nuclear attack. Others, including communications lines, nuclear decision makers, and - most significantly - missile depots, might have accurately shown whether a nuclear attack was imminent.

Also attached to the telegram was a thorough and accurate description of the likely methods by which the United States or NATO would launch nuclear war, including a summary of the five DEFCON levels, here called "operational readiness" levels. This attachment emphasized that once the West had decided to launch a nuclear attack; a substantial preparatory period would be required. These preparations included nuclear consultations through secret channels, transportation of nuclear weapons, and preparation of civil defense institutions.

Doc. 10: Marcus Wolf, known as "the man without a face," who served for decades as East Germany's spymaster wrote, "our Soviet partners had become obsessed with the danger of a nuclear missile attack." <sup>[15]</sup>

**Document 14: Memorandum of Conversation between General Secretary Yuri Andropov and Averell Harriman, 3:00 PM, June 2 1983, CPSU Central Committee Headquarters, Moscow.**

**Source: W. Averell Harriman Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Box 655.**

Harriman met with General Secretary Andropov for an hour and twenty minutes. Harriman told Andropov he was travelling as a private citizen but was accompanied with a translator provided by the Department of State. Harriman's notes show that he believed that Andropov's fear of war through miscalculation was genuine, rather than — to quote Reagan — "huffing and puffing."

Andropov opened the conversation by stating: "Let me say that there are indeed grounds for alarm." He bemoaned the harsh anti-Soviet tone of President Reagan and warned that, "The previous experience of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States cautions beyond all doubt that such a policy can merely lead to aggravation, complexity and danger." Andropov alluded **to nuclear war four times during** his short statement; most ominously, he morosely stated, "It would seem that awareness of this danger should be precisely the common denominator with which statesmen of both countries would exercise restraint and seek mutual understanding to strengthen confidence, to avoid the irreparable. However, I must say that I do not see it on the part of the current administration and they may be moving **toward the dangerous 'red line.'**" **[CRITICAL RISK!]**

Harriman concluded: "the principal point which the General Secretary appeared to be trying to get ... was a genuine concern over the state of U.S.-Soviet relations and his desire to see them at least 'normalized,' if not improved. He seemed to have a real worry that we could come into conflict through **miscalculation.**"

**Document 15: "Meeting of the Politburo," Working notes, August 4, 1983, Top Secret.**

**Source: Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Dmitrii Antonovich Volkogonov Papers, Container 26, Reel 17.**

Two months after meeting with Harriman, Andropov presided over an August 1983 Politburo meeting — one of the last he attended **before being committed to a hospital bed beginning in September [WHERE HE WAS DURING PETROV INCIDENT]**— and spoke of using "diplomatic propaganda actions" to stop the deployment of Pershing II missiles. Andropov enumerated three measures the Soviet leadership needed to take to attempt to stop the November deployment in Western Europe of the Pershings, **which could reach Moscow in less than six minutes -striking before the Soviet leadership could retreat to their bunkers. [SO P-II SIMPLY NEGATED THEIR ELABORATE BUNKER BUILDING]**

- "1. We must not lose time setting in motion all the levers that could impact the governments and parliaments of the NATO countries in order to create maximum obstruction on the path of deployment of American missiles in Europe.
2. It is essential to smartly and precisely coordinate all of this, so diplomatic propaganda actions must complement and reinforce each other.
3. Steps should not be formal, but specifically designed to produce the effect [of aborted deployment]."

Andropov's speech confirms that the Soviets were using propaganda as a tool to stop the deployment of Pershing II missiles, but also reflected the Soviet fear of the destabilization of the nuclear balance referenced in the 1981 and 1982 KGB reports.

**Document 16: Unpublished Interview with State Department Official Mark Palmer, (Excerpt), Undated, circa 1989-1990.**

**Source: Princeton University, Mudd Manuscript Library, Don Oberdorfer Papers 1983-1990, Series 3, Research Documents Files.**

The late Mark Palmer, a top Kremlinologist in the State Department (and U.S. ambassador to Hungary from 1986 to 1990), retrospectively summarized the Reagan administration's internal "argument" about "what the Soviet view of the West is," in an unpublished interview with *The Washington Post's* Don Oberdorfer.

"Paul [Nitze's and others] view is that they [the Soviets] never really felt threatened ... And most Western analysts — or many, particularly the political-military type analysts feel that way, because they have a hard time, I think, psychologically seeing, as most people do, seeing themselves as possibly being a bad guy *in anyone else's eyes*.... [I.e., "how could anyone see US as an evil empire?"]

**[NITZE WRONG! AND "FALSE MIRROR IMAGING".**

"I, on the other hand, think that what Gordievsky [whom he met] reported in '81 and etc. — that he's reporting accurately the mood in Moscow. That the Soviets have felt surrounded, that **they are paranoid, that they have seen us as being unpredictable and irresponsible from their point of view in doing all sorts of things — invading communist countries**, etc, all sorts of stuff. Therefore, I find this entirely credible that they could have, during [what was] a very tense period anyway, [] saw the INF deployments as a threat to them. These were missiles that could hit the Soviet Union. Their [analogous] missiles -the SS 20s- could not hit the United States."

**Document 17: United States Information Agency Memorandum for CIA Director William J. Casey, from Charles Z. Wick, "Soviet Propaganda Alert No. 13," May 5, 1983, Unclassified.**

**Source: CIA Records Search Tool (CREST) at the National Archives, Doc No/ESDN: CIA RDP85M00364R001903760018-0.**



The USIA's "Soviet Propaganda Alerts" regularly reported to policymakers news summaries from the Soviet press framed as propaganda orchestrated by the Soviet leadership for political means.

The thirteenth issue of the "Soviet Propaganda Alert," sent to CIA Director William Casey, relayed that Soviet media had reported that the Pentagon was making "horrendous plans for unleashing and conducting protracted nuclear war against the Soviet Union." Soviet media described the U.S. strategy as "escalating a conflict to nuclear war and delivering a first strike, in particular by intermediate-range missiles in Western Europe."

[POINT IS THAT THE LEADERS BELIEVED WHAT THEY WERE SAYING TO THE WEST! TO REJECT THE MISSILES, BECAUSE (THE LEADERS REALLY BELIEVED) THEY WERE TO ATTACK THE SU!

**Document 18: "Subject: U.S.-Soviet Relations," The White House Memorandum of Conversation, October 11, 1983, Secret.**

**Source: Reagan Presidential Library, Matlock Files, Chron October 1983 [10/11/1983-10/24/1983], Box 2, 90888.**

U.S.-Soviet backchannel contacts warned that the tense atmosphere in the Soviet Union was not only propaganda. This memo summarizes NSC Soviet expert Jack Matlock's lunch meeting with Sergei Vishensky, a columnist for *Pravda*, with "sound Party and (almost certainly) KGB credentials" at The Buck Stops Here Cafeteria. Vishensky, whom Matlock believes was "conveying a series of messages someone in the regime wants us to hear," warned that "the state of U.S.-Soviet relations has deteriorated to a dangerous point. Many in the Soviet public are asking **if war is imminent.**" He also told Matlock that "the leadership is convinced that the Reagan Administration is out to bring their system down [**Yes! That was more true than I imagined then. But not by attack!**] and will give no quarter; therefore they have no choice but to hunker down and **fight back.**" [Preempt?!]

**Document 20: Herbert E. Meyer, National Intelligence Council, "Subject: The View from Moscow, November 1983 Undated." Secret.**

**Source: Reagan Presidential Library, Fortier Files, Soviet Project [1 of 2], Box 97063.**

Herbert E. Meyer, Vice Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, summarized and circulated two views of the uncertainty in Moscow in this 1983 memo, which — as Mark Palmer suggested — was "an attempt to place ourselves in Soviet shoes [and] look at the world as they look at it."

After presenting a bleak view for the future of the Soviet Union the memo concludes by asking, "What does all this mean for future Soviet actions?" He presented two views: that the Soviet leadership would either "make necessary sacrifices to stay in the game, get their licks in whenever and wherever they can, and count on new successes to come" or, with less likelihood, "the Soviets might consider themselves **backed into a corner and lash out dangerously.**"

**Document 22: Series of five interviews with Colonel General Andrian A. Danilevich by John G. Hines, December 18, 1990 to December 9, 1994, in *Soviet Intentions 1965-1985: Volume II Soviet Post-Cold War Testimonial Evidence*, by John G. Hines, Ellis M. Mishulovich, of BDM Federal, INC. for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of Net Assessment. Unclassified with portions "retroactively" classified.**

**Source: Defense Department Freedom of Information Act release.**

BDM interviews conducted with the Soviet military elite after the USSR's collapse provide a retrospective glimpse into the minds of the Soviets, whom some U.S. policy makers were trying to understand in 1983.

Andrian Danilevich, a senior military strategist who reported to Marshal Akhromeyev and authored the three-volume *Strategy of Deep Operations*, "the basic reference document for Soviet strategic and operational nuclear and conventional planning," told interviewer John Hines of a general fear of war. He recalled "vivid personal memories" and "frightening situations" during "the period of great tension" in 1983, but that there was never a sense of "an immediate threat" of attack within the general staff. The KGB, he said, may have "overstated the level of tension" because they "are generally incompetent in military affairs and exaggerate what they do not understand."

**[But Andropov came from KGB: was he subject to this bias, and also to their influence?] PUTIN NOW**

While recognizing the increased danger of the War Scare, the Soviet General Staff appeared to be less fearful of an imminent American nuclear strike than their KGB counterparts.

**Document 23: Interview with Lieutenant General Gelii Viktorovich Batenin by John G. Hines, August 6, 1993 in *Soviet Intentions 1965-1985: Volume II Soviet Post-Cold War Testimonial Evidence*, by John G. Hines, Ellis M. Mishulovich, of BDM Federal, INC. for the Office of the Secretary of Defense Net Assessment. Unclassified with portions "retroactively" classified.**

**Source: Defense Department Freedom of Information Act release.**

Gelii Batenin, who worked for Marshal Akhromeyev in the General Staff, told interviewers, "I am very familiar with RYaN." He also confirmed that the situation was tense but that he personally felt no fear of imminent war. "There was a great deal of tension in the General Staff at that time and we worked long hours, longer than usual. I don't recall a period more tense since the Caribbean Crisis in 1962."

**Document 24: Interview with Colonel General Varfolomei Vladimirovich Korobushin with participation by Senior Defense Department Advisor Vitalii Kataev by John G. Hines, December 10, 1992 in *Soviet Intentions 1965-1985: Volume II Soviet Post-Cold War Testimonial Evidence*, by John G. Hines, Ellis M. Mishulovich, of BDM Federal, INC. for the Office of the Secretary of Defense Net Assessment. Unclassified with portions "retroactively" classified.**

**Source: Defense Department Freedom of Information Act release.**

Vitalii Kataev, former Defense Industry Department Senior Advisor, recounted the situation as more dire than some of his colleagues remembered: "We in the Central Committee's Defense Department considered the early 1980s to be a crisis period, a pre-wartime period. We organized night shifts so that there was always someone on duty in the Central Committee. When Pershing IIs were deployed, there appeared the question of what to do with them in case they were in danger of falling into Warsaw Pact hands during a war. These missiles had to be launched. This made them extremely destabilizing. Furthermore, the only possible targets of these missiles was our leadership in Moscow because Pershings could not reach most of our missiles."

Varfolomei Korobushin, former Deputy Chief of Staff of Strategic Rocket Forces revealed that, "it took just 13 seconds to deliver the decision [to launch a nuclear attack] to all of the launch sites in the Soviet Union."



Document 26: October 10, 1983, Diary Entry by Ronald Reagan.

Source: *The Reagan Diaries Unabridged: Volume 1: January 1981-October 1985*, edited by Douglas Brinkley, some information censored by request of the National Security Council.

President Reagan himself came to an epiphany of the unfeasibility of nuclear war during this period. On the morning of Columbus day, October 10, 1983, he watched an advance screening of the television film *The Day After*, at Camp David. *The Day After* was a realistic portrayal of nuclear war described by *The Washington Post* as a "horrific vision of nuclear holocaust." Reagan wrote in his diary: "It has Lawrence Kansas wiped out in a nuclear war with Russia. It is powerfully done -all \$7 mil. worth. It's very effective & left me greatly depressed."<sup>[18]</sup> As Andropov had told Harriman, the leaders of the two superpowers did indeed share a "common denominator:" fear of the danger of "conflict through miscalculation."

Monday, October 10 Columbus day. In the morning at Camp D. I ran the tape of the movie ABC

is running on the air Nov. 20. It's called "The Day After." It has Lawrence Kansas wiped out in a nuclear war with Russia. It is powerfully done-all \$7 mil. worth. It's very effective & left me greatly depressed. So far they haven't sold any of the 25 spot ads scheduled & I can see why. Whether it will be of help to the "anti nukes" or not, I cant say. My own reaction was one of our having to do all we can to **have a deterrent** & to see **there is never a nuclear war**.